



Rhode Island's Career Resource Network

News Corner

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Support for Academic and Career Counseling Programs



Comprehensive School Counseling

Many organizations and individuals nationally and in Rhode Island are working toward a goal, often described as "comprehensive school counseling." This has implications not only for school counselors, but to all who assist students/clients with career planning.

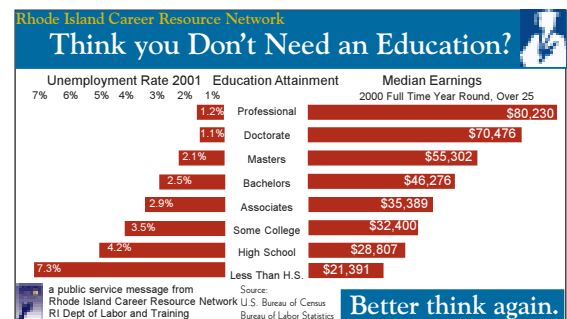
"Comprehensive school counseling" generally refers to a well planned program of guidance through all grades of a school, from elementary through high school. The concepts on which the program is based are equally applicable to pre-school and post-secondary programs. The program concentrates on the development of each student, rather than on record keeping, budgeting, staffing and other elements of "input."

Education is changing. Accountability, "No Child Left Behind," standards-based assessment, concern for school safety, and the vouchers movement are a few of the current trends which are forcing major changes in education. The economy is changing as business and industry require highly skilled workers and workers must have strong academic and personal/social competence. Advances in technology, especially in new ways of communicating and increased access to information, have changed how people work, both in schools and in business and industry. These and other factors underlie current developments in school counseling.

The National Standards for School Counseling Programs, published by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) in 1997, identifies three major areas of student development: academic, career, and personal/social. In the academic area students will acquire needed learning skills and will complete school with the academic preparation necessary to make choices from a wide variety of options. In the career area students will acquire the skills needed to investigate the world of work in relation to self and to make informed career decisions. In the personal/social area students will develop interpersonal skills, set goals and

CRN Educational Attainment Poster Now Available

The Educational Attainment poster in the illustration below is available in 11x17 inch size from the CRN. This poster illustrates the direct correlation between educational attainment, the unemployment rate and median earnings. To request a single copy, send a fax (462-8766) or e-mail (crn@dlt.state.ri.us) with your request and your complete postal address.



take action to achieve them, and understand safety and survival skills. The Standards then expands these areas into lists of specific competencies to be attained by students.

The Rhode Island School Counselor Association (RISCA) has disseminated the *Standards* to its members and others and is aggressively considering how they might be applied to Rhode Island school systems. Other entities, including the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, a program funded by the Perkins Act and administered by the Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology at Rhode Island College, and the Rhode Island Career Resource Network are also supporting this movement. (Continued on page 2)



Comprehensive School Counseling (Continued from page 1)

Obviously, the development of students in these three areas is part of the total education process, and responsibility is shared with teachers, administrators, and other educators. The standards would require thinking of counseling as a kindergarten through high school function, a change from the traditional concept of the guidance counselor in secondary schools only. Several Rhode Island school districts now have counselors in the elementary schools and the number of such positions will increase. Many activities in support of counseling goals are actually being performed by classroom teachers in a wide variety of grade levels and subject areas. The counselor, formerly often working in relative isolation, now has the opportunity to become an internal consultant who provides support to teachers working toward these goals.

Persons who work in organizations other than schools may find the school counseling developments useful since they share the basic goals of academic, career, and personal/social development, and concepts and programs developed for schools may be equally applicable in other settings.

Encouraged by RISCA, the R. I. General Assembly included the following text in budget Article 18, spring 2002:

The general assembly recognizes the contribution to positive educational change, to the implementation of the "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001," and to the success of students in three developmental domains: academic, career, and personal/social. It endorses the National Standards for School Counseling Programs as developed by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). Further, the general assembly encourages every district to implement a K-12 standards-based comprehensive, developmental school counseling program.

America's Career Resource Network (ACRN), of which the Rhode Island Career Resource Network is a part, was charged by Congress "to provide support for a career guidance and academic counseling program designed to promote improved career and education decision making by individuals."

More information on school counseling is available from the ASCA website (www.schoolcounselor.org) and from the Career Resource Network.

Occupational Focus:

Computer Support Specialist

Almost everyone uses a computer these days. And almost everyone needs help when the computer does not perform as desired. Computer Support Specialists resolve technical problems and provide other assistance to computer users. This is one of the fastest growing occupations in Rhode Island, with employment projected to nearly double between 1998 and 2008 from 1,071 to 1,812. Computer Support Specialists may work for banks, government agencies, health care, insurance and financial services companies, manufacturers, wholesale and retail vendors, or any other employer which uses computers. Some may be self-employed or employed by a company which provides computer support to other companies.

This occupation requires strong computer hardware and software skills and also strong problem-solving, analytical, and communication skills. College graduates with a computer-related degree and relevant experience should find favorable employment prospects. Those without a degree may also qualify if they have essential computer experience and the other required skills. Several certificate programs offered by a variety of vendors, product makers, and training institutions will help qualify a person.

This can be a relatively high stress occupation because of the need to solve problems quickly so as to minimize interruptions in work. Overtime and non-traditional working hours may be required. Rapid technological developments make continued training an absolute necessity.

Median annual earnings of Computer Support Specialists in 1998 were \$37,120 in the United States, well above average for all workers. The middle 50 percent earned between \$28,880 and \$48,810. The highest 10 percent earned more than \$73,790.

For additional information consult the *Choices* computer program or the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (<http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm>), or contact the Association of Computer Support Specialists, <http://www.acss.org>, or the Association of Support Professionals, <http://www.asponline.com>.

What's New in the CRN Corner?



Real Game classes will be offered this fall and winter for teachers and others who wish to use the *Play Real Game* (grades 3 and 4), *The Real Game* (grades 7 and 8), the *Be Real Game* (grades 9 and 10), and *Real Times, Real Life* (adults). Announcements will be sent to persons who work with the appropriate levels, and will be posted on the CRN web site, www.dlt.state.ri.us/crn (click on "Training"). To use any of these products, a facilitator's kit is required (cost approximately \$200). Descriptions of these games appeared in the summer issue of the CRN *News Corner*. Additional information is on the www.realgame.com web site.

Facilitating Career Development class will be offered Wednesday evenings from 5:30 to 9:30 starting September 27. This 120-hour program (80 hours class time in addition to 40 hours outside of class) together with relevant experience and education, is the main requirement for internationally recognized certification as a Global Career Development Facilitator (G.C.D.F.). Announcement and registration forms can be downloaded from the CRN web site, www.dlt.state.ri.us/crn (click on "Training"). Registration is limited to the first 25 who apply.

America's Career Kit has a new web site, careeronestop.org, which will be active sometime in September. America's Learning Exchange (alx.org) is no longer an active site, but many of its features are incorporated in Career OneStop. See page 4 for a description of Career OneStop.

The 4th Partnerships to Employment Conference, organized by the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College, will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Warwick on October 21. The conference, centering on serving individuals with disabilities, provides sessions for educators, employers, agency personnel, and others. For additional information visit the Sherlock Center web site, www.sherlockcenter.org.

LMI Stat Track, an e-mail newsletter, is now available from DLT's Labor Market Information Unit. The newsletter provides access to the latest information on Rhode Island's labor market. The first edition, issued in August 2002, includes links to *Local Area Unemployment Statistics*, *Current Employment Statistics*, *Trends in the Rhode Island Labor Market*, *The 2001 Rhode Island Statistical and Fiscal Digest*, and *Rhode Island's 2000 Census Data*. If you would like to receive this newsletter, send an e-mail with your name and e-mail address to Nick Ucci, nucci@dlt.state.ri.us.

The Department of Labor and Training's web site, www.dlt.state.ri.us, has a fresh, new look. In August, the Department unveiled a brand new home page, which is compact, attractive, and easy to navigate. In addition to the change in appearance, there are some new functions available on the web site including pop up menus for the Department's major divisions and the capability to access the "Most Visited Sites" from the main page.

Homework Tips for Parents, a publication just released by the U. S. Department of Education, provides information on research-based, effective practices in both English and Spanish for teachers and tutors. To request a free copy, while supplies last, call the Department of Education's publications center at 1-877-4ED-PUBS and specify item number EKH0070P. For an online version, visit www.nochildleftbehind.gov and select the "Parents' Tool Box" link.

Do you have comments or suggestions on the contents of our CRN News Corner? Do you have information that you'd like us to publish? If so, please write, call, fax or e-mail us at:

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A Web Site Worth Surfing:



America's Career Kit



America's Career Kit, the group of Internet resources from the U. S. Department of Labor, is on the move! A new web site design, **Career One Stop**, scheduled to be operational in September, provides more user-friendly access to all of the services of America's Career Kit plus links to many related resources. A demo version of the site is available now at <http://demo.careeronestop.org>, but all features are not yet fully accessible.

On the main screen a job seeker or employer has the option to choose "Careers," "Jobs," or "Services" from a menu across the top of the screen. These major categories link to America's Career InfoNet, America's Job Bank, and America's Service Locator. Lists for Job Seekers or Employers in the center of the main screen provide numerous resources by task (e.g., "Search Job Listings," "Locate Potential Employers"). Links to other useful sites, such as O*Net and First Gov for Workers, are provided in a column on the left side of the screen. Because there are so many options available on this site, it is impossible to include all of them in this review.

The major change to the site is a more flexible and easy-to-navigate design. America's Learning eXchange (alx.org) ceased to be an active site this summer, but the information it contained is still available in the Career OneStop system. New "crosswalks" in both America's Job Bank (AJB) and America's Career Infonet will better bridge learning and working. Access to information for state and local delivery systems has been improved. There are also better connections to WIA-eligible training providers and programs.

Contact the CRN if you would like training on the Career OneStop. Workshops will be scheduled if there is sufficient interest.